

Organic poultry farm located in Harrington receives Environmental Stewardship Award

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Harrington, Del. – Poultry farmers John and Linda Brown were recognized during Delaware Ag Week for their efforts to improve water quality and reduce nutrient runoff with the 2018 Delaware Environmental Stewardship Award.

The Brown's L&J Farm is located in Harrington, where they raise chickens for Perdue Farm's



(Pictured L to R): Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Kenny Bounds, John and Linda Brown.

Coleman Organic division. Certified organic, the poultry houses have an attached area where the birds can spend the daylight hours and the houses are equipped with windows to let in natural light. Being environmentally friendly, the Browns harness solar energy to power the farm and utilize an electric car; woods provide a barrier against noise and odors; runoff is treated by a series of storm-water ponds; and all the

houses and the manure shed have concrete pads, which are kept very clean. L&J Farm is a perfect example of a beautiful, neighbor-friendly farm.

The Environmental Stewardship Awards were presented Monday to the Browns and three other runner-ups by Nutrient Management Administrator Chris Brosch. Each year, the Commission partners with Delaware's poultry integrators to sponsor the Environmental Stewardship Awards.

"Each of the companies nominates a Delaware poultry grower that excels in preserving and enhancing environmental quality on their farms," Brosch said. "These farmers practice excellent manure management, proper composting of mortalities and accurate record keeping. They also use enhanced conservation practices on the farm as a whole."

Runners-up were:

- Chad and Joanna Carpenter of East Piney Grove Farm have been raising chickens since 2010. The couple grows for Mountaire Farms, with a capacity of 300,000 birds. The Carpenters have installed heavy use pads, fenced off the composter to keep vultures and foxes away from the composted mortalities and redesigned the drainage swales to prevent runoff from going into nearby tax ditches. They also have planted a vegetative buffer of trees to help with odors.
- Ken and Nicole Wilkins of Felton, grow for Amick on a newer, picture-perfect farm that they named the "Funny Farm." In 2015, they built three poultry houses on their homestead, along with a manure shed and channel composter. The storm water engineering includes a large storm-water pond to treat runoff from the production area. A screen of trees has been planted to assist in containing odors. Fly traps are used throughout the farm and near the composter to reduce these pests.
- Carol Johnson of Bridgeville, who grows for Allen Harim,

raises 90,000 chickens and tills twenty-five acres on Loockerman Farm. The farm has two manure structures, has heavy use pads installed on the poultry houses, and utilizes solar energy to help power the poultry operation. In addition, cover crops are utilized as a conservation practice on the cropland. Ms. Johnson has been a 4-H leader for more than 25 years.

The Browns will receive \$1,000, a plaque and sign for their farm. The runners-up will receive \$500, plaques and signs.

Past recipients of the Environmental Stewardship Award include: Randy and Jordan McCloskey (2017); Ted Layton and Scott Willey (2016); Chris Lesniowski of Marydel (2015); Georgie Cartanza of Little Creek (2014); Connie Carmean of Laurel (2013); Marilyn and Lee Ellers, Sparrow's Song Farm, Houston (2012); Douglas and Deborah Vanderwende, Locust Grove Farm, Greenwood (2011); Frank Robinson and family, Dead Broke Farm, Harrington (2010); Mary Bryan, Laurel (2009); Joe Bauer, Harrington (2008); Scott Peterman, Milford (2007); and Guy and Nancy Phillips, Georgetown (2006).

The awards are supported by Allen Harim Foods, Amick Farms, Mountaire Farms and Perdue Farms.

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